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THE impudence of employees has been a fruitful topic in several of our exchanges for some time past, and the ill effects of such a policy from a business standpoint has been indignantly enlarged upon. It is mortifying and perhaps exasperating to be treated discourteously by a clerk when one calls at a business place upon business, but there is an edge taken off by the fact that it is an employee, and the expression is not that of the firm itself. When the head of the firm or other members of it indulge in incivility, as they frequently do, the insult is a decided one, and there is no compensating quality about it. Possibly this example may set the note that is played upon by the employees.

We experienced an incident not long since that illustrates the inexpediency of omitting politeness from the ordinary concerns of business. We had occasion to have a number of electrotypes framed of gold and silver medals awarded by various exhibitions to a large concern here. We called at a prominent frame maker not far from Fourteenth Street, with the bulky package of electrotypes in our hand. We approached the gentleman whose name was over the door, who is the sole proprietor of the concern, and without giving us an opportunity to explain our call or looking up from his paper, he said, "We don't want to buy anything to-day and don't want any advertising," in a very surly tone.

Then it was our turn, and we told him what we wanted, and opened up our package, and he apologized and we talked business and he finally gave us an estimate on the fifteen frames, \$300, we tied up our electrots again and for three minutes we discoursed with him on the subject of civility and took our work elsewhere for the same money. That's the only way to reach such cases.

We went in fully determined to leave the work there, for we knew it would be well done, and the man's own needless act was all that stood between him and probably one hundred and fifty dollars profit.

BEGINNING with this issue our Art Department will be under the management of Mr. George R. Halm, whose name requires no other recommendation or commendation with our readers, for the great majority of them are familiar with the useful and original designs from this talented artist. Mr. Halm's skill has been made familiar to the reading public and especially to those interested in art, through his numerous contributions to

almost every first class magazine in the country. He is a prolific worker, gifted with phenomenal originality, and our readers may have every reason to expect a marked improvement in our pages, practically and artistically, from Mr. Halm's connection with us.

SINCE our last issue Congress has found time sufficient to accept the gift offered the country by Mr. Wm. H. Vanderbilt and Mrs. U. S. Grant, of the presents received by General Grant during his trip around the world. The manner in which this matter has been treated has bordered upon the disgraceful, the act upon Mr. Vanderbilt's part was a voluntary and generous one, and it was discourteously and unwarrantably ignored by those who should have given it attention. The gifts were stored in the cellar of some one of the Departments, while inquiries from inquisitive visitors failed to meet with any response as to their whereabouts, and instead of affording instruction to the masses, as was the wish of the donor, these valuable and rare articles served merely as so many encumbrances in the public buildings.

THE decorative quality of ocean steamers is no mean element in its popularity and, as we pointed out in an exhaustive article upon the subject two months ago, there have been as many improvements made in that as in more practical features. We recently visited a new vessel of one of the German lines, a vessel that arrived in this port upon its first trip, and the interior decorations excelled anything that has hitherto been done. The gilt ornamentation is profuse and yet not obtrusive, no stucco is used, but the gilding, carving, cartouches, etc., are of natural wood; the panels that set in the walls and ceiling are from the hands of some of Germany's and France's best artists; there is a combination of Roccoco and German Renaissance in the furnishing and decoration that imparts richness and solidity at the same time.

AT this season, when persons generally are returning from the country and an interest in furnishing is naturally revived, it is reasonable to expect a fresh impetus in subscriptions, and we wish all our readers would ask their acquaintances to join them in becoming subscribers. In fact, any one who so desires may make a comfortable income by securing subscribers for us. There is no objectionable feature about asking one's friends to share in the benefits of a good thing, and this is what a recommendation of our paper amounts to. There might also be a selfish motive for our readers to consider, for the more subscribers we have the more interesting we can make our pages.

THERE has been an effort to credit Andrew Lang with wit or at least humor. The effort, however, seems to have been futile, for it has been quite impossible thus far to find very much that can be really considered humorous in anything he has written. This is not detracting one particle from the exceeding cleverness of his writings, and the concession may be made that in "Books and Bookmen" there are several witty and bright passages, though the general tone can hardly be favorably compared with its brilliant predecessor "The Book Hunter," by J. Hill Burton.

THE valuable information contained in an article in our August issue upon Household Linen, was obtained from Messrs. James McCreery & Co., of New York, a house having a more extensive and well selected assortment of such goods than almost any other in the city.